

From: REDACTED@gov.scot **On Behalf Of** First Minister
Sent: 22 October 2018 11:35
To: REDACTED@gov.scot
Cc: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>; REDACTED@gov.scot; REDACTED@gov.scot;
 REDACTED@gov.scot; Bowman k (Katy)
Subject: First Minister at Newsxchange - Response to The BBC

[Redacted]

Please find below the full email that was sent to [Redacted] at the BBC with regards to the First Minister declining the invitation to attend the News Xchange event on the 13 November 2013.

Kind regards

[Redacted]

The First Minister

5th Floor| St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [Redacted]



Office of the First Minister of Scotland

FirstMinister.gov.scot

Prionn Mhinistear na h-Alba

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Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your email.

Having considered the issue it is with regret that the First Minister will not be available to host the reception given the BBC decision to invite Mr Bannon and to provide his views with such a prominent platform.

While it is of course for the BBC to decide who you invite and what platform you give them, for us an appearance by the First Minister would risk both legitimising his views and being seen as an endorsement by the First Minister of the decision by the BBC to provide him with such a prominent platform which we are not prepared to do.

A discussion on the impact of populism and how it challenges the media does not in our view require providing a platform for such views through a keynote address regardless of any post speech discussion. That in my view provides an opportunity to amplify the alt-right and fake news messages rather than to discuss and debate the media's role and responsibility in relation to them.

It is quite unbelievable but regrettably not surprising to us that the BBC consider this an appropriate approach to take.

It is disappointing that by hosting him in the manner that you are you have created a situation where your delegates will not be able to hear from the First Minister, it is also deeply disappointing to have this done as a late addition to the programme putting us and no doubt other speakers in a very difficult position.

I understand Lord Hall has requested a meeting with the First Minister while he is in Edinburgh. If we are able to schedule that I'm sure this matter may be discussed further at that point.

regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted] First Minister of Scotland
Scottish Government
[Redacted]

From: REDACTED@bbc.co.uk

Date: Friday, 19 Oct 2018, 11:46 am

To: Lloyd E (Elizabeth) <Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot>; REDACTED@bbc.co.uk;
REDACTED@bbc.co.uk; Bowman K (Katy) Katy.Bowman@gov.scot

Cc: Bowman K (Katy) Katy.Bowman@gov.scot, REDACTED@bbc.co.uk

Subject: RE: First Minister at Newsxchange

[Redacted]

As promised, here is the information you requested.

As you mentioned, it will be really useful to talk all this through and possibly involve Sarah Smith as she will be moderating the Brannon session.

Firstly, I understand your reservations and it is, of course, something we have discussed at length.

A key factor in our decision making is that this conference isn't open to all members of the public. It is a forum for journalists and media executives.

Why?

News Xchange is a journalism conference which seeks to explore the main industry trends and challenges delegates to understand the wider political and social context.

We have a wide range of speakers from Tony Hall to the Parkland student (Dara Rosen) and faculty advisor (Melissa Falkowski), from David Rhodes, CBS News President, to Matthew Caruana Galizia. We provide the opportunity for a wide range of voices and viewpoints to be expressed within a balanced and relevant context. While some of our speakers do attract more "buzz" than others in the run-up to the event, "shock value" is not something that factors in to our agenda-setting.

The single largest issue facing every delegate in our audience (and every Western nation, in

particular) is the rise of populism and what may well turn out to be the transformation of the political landscape of Western democracies. Mr. Bannon is a powerful and influential figure, both in the US and in Europe, promoting an anti-elite movement with this transformation as its goal. We believe that our delegates will benefit greatly from hearing his thoughts and then, led by the BBC's Sarah Smith, an experienced and skilled journalist, questioning, challenging and debating. To do otherwise would be to ignore what is happening in the world: there is a powerful challenge to democracies from within.

He has been invited to speak at News Xchange this year because his views are relevant to understanding the political climate of society at large and therefore to the media industry.

We also consider it our journalistic responsibility to scrutinise his viewpoint.

Steve Bannon will not be paid a speakers' fee for appearing on stage

How?

Steve Bannon will be appearing at the EICC on Wednesday morning. The morning will start with a keynote speech by Lord Hall.

The Steve Bannon session will be moderated by Sarah Smith, BBC Scotland Editor, followed by an open Q&A with delegates. We expect this to be a rigorous, in depth and thorough examination of his views over 60 minutes.

Our conference is for professionals involved in the news industry and not members of the general public.

Opening reception

Steve will not be at the National Museum of Scotland during the First Minister's proposed address. In fact, the opening reception is an separate event which also encompasses a smaller meeting of EBU executives called the News Assembly.

We believe our delegates would be very eager in hearing from the First minister and, likewise, this represents a good opportunity for the First Minister to communicate her message to an influential crowd.

Publicity

His name has been announced to members of the News Xchange distribution list which totals around 8000 journalists. His name has been added to the 'Program' (US spelling!) section on the website.

We have placed his invitation in a specific journalistic context which includes the knowledge he has attended recent events held by our colleagues at The Economist and Bloomberg.

Thanks

[Redacted]
News Xchange

-----Original Message-----

From: Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot [mailto:Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot]

Sent: 18 October 2018 16:42

To: REDACTED@bbc.co.uk; REDACTED@bbc.co.uk; REDACTED@bbc.co.uk; Katy.Bowman@gov.scot

Cc: Katy.Bowman@gov.scot

Subject: First Minister at Newsxchange

Dear [Redacted]

Firstly apologies as I wasn't able to make the conference call yesterday, however having spoken with my colleagues I now have some very serious concerns regarding the First Minister's engagement with the event and how this may be perceived.

My colleagues advised me that the two day conference will now include Steve Bannon as a Key note speaker - to be followed by a Q&A. This was clearly not part of the pitch [Redacted] made when asking for FM to speak at the opening event. Whilst it is of course entirely for EBU to determine who you choose to invite to such an event and how you enable them to present themselves, you will of course understand that this presents considerable reputational issues for me to consider.

I'd be happy to have a further chat about it directly, but as an initial request it would be helpful to know when he's appearing and the details of how you intend to enable his presentation to be thoroughly questioned and challenged.

I understand you told my colleagues that his appearance had been confirmed publicly, I'm afraid I'm struggling to identify any public reference to it at all and I'd be grateful for that.

In addition - what if any media coverage is expected of the conference - is it closed event with no media coverage expected, or will there be reports or perhaps interviews scheduled with speakers.

I appreciate that inviting someone like that to the conference provides a certain shock value and no doubt a buzz around the conference that you would wish to generate, however it raises significant concerns for me in relation to the involvement of the First Minister.

I look forward to hearing from you - given the proximity of the event I'd appreciate information and an opportunity to discuss as early as possible to enable us to make an informed decision.

Best wishes

Liz Lloyd

Chief of Staff to the First Minister
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
Elizabeth.Lloyd@gov.scot